MARVEL

85

DEFALCO
OLLIFFE
BUSCEMA

SPIDER-GIRL®

BUY THIS COMIC OR I'LL **SHOOT** PETER PARKER!

HOO-BOY!

The daughter of the original Spider-Man, May "Mayday" Parker has inherited her father's amazing powers. Possessing the proportionate strength, speed, and agility of a spider, as well as the ability to cling to walls, she now follows in his web-lines! Stan Lee presents...

SPIDER-GIRL

PREVIOUSLY

After failing to convince Normie Osborn to take up the mantle of the Green Goblin, Fury, the Goblin Queen, interrupts his engagement party to Brenda Drago and bonds him with the Venom symbiote.

When Fury later attempts to destroy Phil Urich, the current Green Goblin, she is soundly beaten.

After freeing Normie, Spider-Girl is shocked when her friend decides to keep the symbiote and exploit its power.

Script, Plot & Pencils
Tom DeFalco & Pat Olliffe

Art Finishes
Sal Buscema

Art Finishes, page 22
Scott Koblish

Artists Emeritus
Ron Frenz & Al Williamson

Colorist
Gotham

Colorist, page 22
Digital Rainbow

Letterer
V.C.'s Dave Sharpe

Assistant Editor
Stephanie Moore

Editor
Molly Lazer

Editor in Chief
Joe Quesada

Publisher
Dan Buckley

© 2017 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. WWW.MARVEL.COM

RESCUE ME!

I'm telling you, Normie--*Fury ate FIST!*

Wish I could have seen you flatten that psycho-witch, Phil.

Hey, you and May had your hands full with the *Venom Symbiote.* How'd you take it down again?

We *-uhhh-* shoved it into an oven--

--and it just kind of--

--melted.

Get well Soon! LH²

Phil Urich is secretly the new *Green Goblin.*

He's in the hospital, recuperating from his recent battle with *Fury, the Goblin Queen.*

Your name is *May "Mayday" Parker* and you are the daughter of *Spider-Man.*

You're also a big fat *LIAR!*

Instead of destroying the symbiote, *Normie Osborn* decided to keep it for a pet--*and you just went along with the insanity!*

Of course, you're still not completely sure who's the ***pet*** and who's the ***master.***

How'd you explain your injuries? I assume you didn't tell the doctors that you're a costumed vigilante in your spare time.

I said I was in a car accident.

Did ***Aunt Merry*** buy that story?

Are you ***serious?*** She's my wife, May.

She may not approve of my extracurricular activities, *especially at times like these,* but she knows all about them.

You can't keep secrets from the people you love.

Yeah.

Sure.

Of course.

Phil's doctor comes in to run a few tests, and so...

I...I feel so guilty, Normie.

We can talk about it later. You have to get back to school, and I'm supposed to meet Brenda for a late lunch.

Does *she* know--?!

No way! Contrary to what Phil says, some secrets *shouldn't* be shared.

I don't know how much longer I can go on lying to my *Uncle Phil--and everyone else--*about the symbiote.

Trust me, May--*we're doing the right thing!*

I know I can harness Venom's power for good.

You just need to have a little faith in me.

And those are the kind that usually lead to heartache--

--misery--

--and *disaster!*

QWUMPPP!

My apologies...

...I usually favor a more *subtle* approach.

An artist is known by the quality of his work...and a criminal by the creativity of his escapes.

Unfortunately, the authorities have imprisoned someone I love--

--and it's my responsibility to do the *rescue thing.*

Desperate times call for... ***ahhh,*** you know the drill.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to pick up one of my spare costumes, get it dry-cleaned, outfit it with the appropriate weaponry--

--and, of course, I need to apply my usual white greasepaint.

I want to look my very best, because I'm sure the media will be in a frenzy over--

--the return of

FUNNY FACE!

May! May! Are you all right--?!

MIDTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

I...I guess so. Why do you ask?

We heard you were almost killed at your friend's engagement party.

You must have been totally freaked by that *Venom* creature.

You're so lucky *Chris Jarkoer* was there.

I hate to think what would have happened if he hadn't saved you.

W-what the heck are you guys blathering about?

Who told you that *Chris* saved *me*?

He did--!

We heard it right from the horse's *mouth*.

You're tempted to equate Chris with a different part of a horse's anatomy.

Weren't you the tiniest bit afraid, Chris?

I didn't have time to worry about myself. People were counting on me.

Chris panicked when the symbiote crashed Normie's party, and he didn't settle down for hours.

Should you bust him--

--or is this one of those secrets that *shouldn't* be shared?

Of all the days for *Phil Urich* to be hospitalized!

I'm sure I can handle this crime scene on my own, *Captain Ruiz.*

So am I, *Parker.*

The perp escaped on the way to a court appearance and said something about rescuing a loved one.

His *mother* is in the system, right?

Yeah, she calls herself *Angel Face.* She's been remanded to *Ravencroft.*

Great-- another howler!

I'll make sure she's secure while you gather evidence.

This shouldn't take long--

"--but I need to call my *daughter.*"

ZEEEEEE

What's up, Dad?

Nothing much. I'm just checking in.

You had a rough couple of days with that whole Normie and Venom situation, and I just want to make sure you're okay.

I...I'm fine, Dad... honest!

Why--? You almost never do that.

Well, then, I guess I'll see you later.

Odd!

Very odd!

Was he checking *in--*

--or checking *up?!*

Does he suspect the truth about ***Normie*** and the ***Venom symbiote*** or--

I'm telling you, I saw it on the 'net in computer class. This ***Funny Face*** character is on the loose again.

Big whoop! Ain't like they're going to close school early or anything.

NO--

"--but we can start a betting pool on **who** finally captures him."

EXIT

His mom, ***Angel Face,*** is also a major headcase--

--who often fought ***Uncle Phil*** when he was first breaking into the hero biz.

Funny Face is a complete psycho.

The guy runs around with a creepy-looking puppet that's rigged with all sorts of deadly weaponry--

--and he even talks to the stupid thing as if it were alive.

Even money on where ***Funny Face*** is headed.

I...I was so worried about you, Normie.

I don't know how I'll ever be able to thank *Spider-Girl* for rescuing you from that horrid symbiote.

She knows how you feel, Brenda.

Trust me, it's probably better if you don't even mention the subject.

Believe it or not, everything has turned out for the best.

The experience has galvanized me and inspired me to take charge of my life.

I have a plan that will guarantee our financial independence--

--and allow us to get *married* even sooner than we planned.

A-are you *serious?!?*

Absolutely!

I'm going to meet with my *step-father* later today and set everything in motion.

Details! I want details.

All in good time, my sweet.

All in good time...

Timing is everything.

Your dad's phone call distracted you, so Chris is off the hook--

--at least for *now!*

Of course, Normie's a much bigger problem...and then there's your dad.

Why was he checking up on you?

Does he suspect the truth about the symbiote--

--or was he just making sure that you hadn't ditched school to do something *reallllllly* dumb.

Funny Face may be a major ***derange-o,*** but at least he ***supports*** his family.

He and his mother have always been close.

Although...

Hello, Uncle Phil--?

I hate to bother you, but I need to check a location...

Ravencroft.

Once a facility devoted to the study of the criminally insane, it is now a maximum security prison that merely incarcerates them.

Secured within its massive walls are both the *super-powered--*

--and *super-deadly.*

She looks like she's biding her time, waiting for something.

Does she know her son is free?

PATIENT: ANGEL FACE

Not unless she's telepathic.

She rarely leaves her cell and hasn't had any access to news or gossip.

We've doubled the guards and locked down the entire facility, but I doubt that will discourage *Funny Face.*

I'm going to check in with the precinct and see if they have any word on him.

I'm afraid there's nothing new to report, Captain...

POLICE
MIDTOWN SOUTH

We initiated a tri-state alert, but Funny Face seems to have disappeared.

I'll call you as soon as I hear--

Oh, no!

Captain... there's a chance he may have *played* us.

We need to EVACUATE this area!

GO!

MOVE!

NOW!

KWABWOOM!

Have I come at a bad time?

I know that you people work for the city and have very strict rules about your hours.

If you've already finished your shift or are due a break, please feel free to leave.

I'm not here to *inconvenience* anyone.

I just want to rescue my friend and get out of your hair.

There's absolutely no need for violence.

If we all agree to respect each other's boundaries, we can get through this with a minimum of fuss.

Or I could just do it the *old-fashioned way--*

--and start mowing people down!

You there--*in the suit*--you're either a plain-clothes detective or an innocent civilian.

Either way, you'll make an excellent ***hostage.***

Listen up, everyone! You all know ***who*** I want.

Bring ***him*** to me right now--

--or I'll separate this man from his limbs.

"H-him--"?!?

We assumed you'd go after your mother.

Don't be ridiculous! You're even ***crazier*** than I am if you think she needs *my* help to escape.

No, I'm here to rescue ***him.***

Him ***who?!***

ahem

I believe I have the answer.

Spider-Girl!

What are you doing with *Bunky?*

A friend told me it was being stored in the property room, so I've been keeping an eye on it.

It--?!?!

Don't you dare insult my *Bunky!*

Release him immediately or my finger-blaster starts boring holes in this geek's head.

Geek--?!?

You don't want to test my patience, Funny Face.

Release the *=uhhh=* geek--

--or the puppet gets PULPED!

Y-you're *bluffing.* You don't have the stomach to shed innocent blood.

I, on the other hand, have absolutely no respect for human life.

By the way, I am fully aware of the cops behind me, and they *reallllllly* want to stop making me nervous.

They aren't your problem.

I am.

You may treat Bunky as if he were *alive--*

--but I'm betting his head'll pop just like a big ol' balloon.

All right!

All right, you heartless witch!

I'm willing to deal.

How do we exchange hostages?

Instead of dragging this out, I propose we just toss them in the air--

--and hope for the best!

BUNKY!

THWUMPPP!

UFFFT

Who's the geek now--?!?

Nicely done, uhhhh sir...but you should have just run for cover.

W-why'd you pull me away?

I...I could have flattened him.

Perhaps, but that's *my* job.

It's one of the reasons why *I'm* in costume and you're *not*.

B-b-but--!

You're safe now, sir.

These fine officers will protect you.

I...

...I just don't believe that girl.

Yeah, she is pretty spectacular... *ain't she?*

I believe this is our dance.

M-my poor little Bunky!

If you've injured him--!

You have *got* to be kidding.

You don't understand.

No one does.

Bunky is my best friend.

Spider-Girl, LOOK OUT--!

Whoa! Take it easy, Parker. She knows what she's doing.

You've been a lab rat too long.

We uniforms know better than to get between two warring costumes.

I hate to bring this up, but you do realize that Bunky is a, *y'know,* *PUPPET?!?*

It doesn't matter.

Friendship is a two-way street.

I accept him for all his faults and failings.

He doesn't judge or belittle me.

He just accepts me for *who* and *what* I am.

KRAAA KRAAA

I'm not surprised you don't understand true friendship.

H-huh--?!

You think you have all the answers and are always forcing your opinions on everyone else.

Blah Blah Blah! *Crime is bad. You shouldn't steal or decapitate hostages.*

You needed to be more open-minded, Spider-Girl.

I stand by Bunky even when I don't agree with his--

What have you DONE?!

He can't breathe.

He'll *suffocate.*

You monster--!

He is claustrophobic and you're torturing him.

His mother used to tie him up and lock him in the closet for days at a time.

I...I didn't *know.*

I am truly sorry for any childhood traumas your, *errrr*, puppet may have experienced.

I'll apologize to him later--

--after the world is safe from *you*.

That will never happen, Spider-Girl.

Not only is my costume designed to deflect your strongest blows--

--but I am equipped with enough explosives to obliterate this entire building.

Really?! I hate to force an opinion on you--

--but I'm pretty sure you're *lying*.

THWA-TWOOM!

Too bad your jaw isn't as padded as your costume.

Told ya there was nothing to worry about.

The lady's good.

Yeah... *very good!*

That thing he said about explosives. You think we need the bomb squad?

Nah, I'm pretty sure Spider-Girl would sense any danger.

One hour and twenty-seven minutes later, on the roof of the precinct house...

Funny Face is back behind bars, and ***Bunky*** has been returned to the property room-- *thanks to you!*

I've got to hand it to you, sweetheart--you outmaneuvered and outfought that lunatic at every turn.

I couldn't be prouder.

Uhhh, Dad...

T-there's *something* you should know.

What is it, hon?

I have a big math project due tomorrow, so I need to get home.

I...

...I guess I'll see you later.

NELSON AN
ASSOCIATES

Are you sure about this decision, Normie?

Absolutely, Dad.

I've given it a lot of thought.

The time has finally come for me to grow up, start acting like a man--

--and take my rightful place as the head of the *Osborn Corporation.*

I wish your mother could be here. She just wanted you to be happy, but she secretly hoped you would join the family business.

I know she would be so very proud of you today.

And so would my *real father.*

Yes...*well*... I suppose so, Normie.

I may have outgrown that name, Dad.

It's time for people to start calling me *Norman*...just like my grandfather.

THE END... for now!

INTERLUDE:

The world knows him as **Wolverine**, and he is the very best at what he does.

Right now he is bonding with his daughter by tracking her through the New Jersey Pine Barrens--

--and reveling in the thrill of the hunt.

Suddenly, his animal-like senses detect a vaguely familiar and menacing scent...

RRRRR-SSHLUMPP

Rina--!

Dad--?!?

Rina Logan has always been Daddy's girl--

--although she calls herself **Wild Thing** whenever she's in costume.

You okay, Dad--?

D-Daddy--?!?

In the weeks to come, Rina will face the greatest challenge of all. Who will **live?** Who will **die?** And who will be...

...THE LAST HERO STANDING?

MAYDAY'S MAILBOX

Dear SPIDER-GIRL team,

This is the first letter I have written to you, but I've been reading the title since issue #0. The story in SPIDER-GIRL #81 turned out to have a very strong impact on me, and I just wanted to thank you for such a wonderful, thoughtful story. I often find myself in arguments with my own dad over silly things, and I found I could relate strongly to May in the tale. Mayday's internal monologue reflected my own feelings when she said to herself: "You love your dad. Really and truly. Maybe it's time you lighten up and really tried to meet him halfway." I'm going to take May's advice and try the same.

Thanks, Spider-Girl!

Nathan Shapiro

We wish you the best of luck, Nathan!

Dear Tom, Ron, Sal and the entire SPIDER-GIRL team,

I have just finished reading SPIDER-GIRL #81, and like most of the stories that I read in this overlooked gem of a comic, it has compelled me to write a letter to tell you all why this book is one of the best that Marvel is publishing.

REASON #1—The ongoing theme of "growing up." In almost every story we get to watch how May is maturing, both as a hero and as a person. We get to see how she handles the challenge of balancing POWER and RESPONSIBILITY, and how she struggles with the expectations of her parents, friends and teachers, whether she is in her costume or not.

REASON #2—Witnessing what the future has to show. IF you have read this series from beginning to the latest issue, then you know for a fact that these stories take place in a future outside of the mainstream Marvel Universe. A future where Peter and Mary Jane got the chance to raise their daughter May. We get to see what this future brings to the Parker family, and to a lesser extent, everyone else from the Avengers to the X-Men (who now call themselves X-People). There is a surprise in every issue when you get to find out what has happened to someone else besides Spider-Man in the last umpteen years. A good example of this is found in issue #81, where we learn about Electro. Also, this leads us to wonder where May is and what she is doing in the mainstream Spider-books? I guess we true believers will have to wait and see for any revelations on those questions.

REASON #3—May Parker is not Peter Parker. The fact that May does not think absolutely and exactly like her father opens up a grand amount of possibilities. She is not a loner trying to fit in like Pete was in his youth. She has a circle of friends that she loves and confides in. Watching her save the world as a super hero while trying to maintain her relationships with Davida, Courtney, Jimmy and company is one of the reasons I keep reading this book. Also, when things get blue, May does not go off somewhere and brood like Peter did. Unlike her dear father, May has a lot of people she can talk to about what's bugging her. If she needs advice on her heroics, she can talk to Peter or her Uncle Phil. When she needs a timeout from her parents, she has a group of amazing friends, both of the spandex and non-spandex variety, to lean on.

REASON #4 - This comic has a letters page! Every month we the readers get the chance to share our love for this comic book with other readers and with the creative team. Also, the joy of seeing our letters printed is a profound experience for us who take the time to write them. I myself fell deeper in love with this book when I got my letter published in issue #48 and again in issue #80. I guess I wrote something that you folks loved reading so much that you had to share it.

James Bell
Ontario, Canada

We apologize for failing to live up to Reason #4 for the past few months, James...but we'll really try to do better.

Dear Spider-Team,

I could go on and on about how SPIDER-GIRL is the last Marvel comic representing the old school (see: the best school) but I think that's pretty common knowledge now. Most everyone that reads Marvel mentions that SPIDER-GIRL is of a different breed and brings back the good old days. I hope it stays around forever.

This letter represents constructive criticism. It deals with certain shots where you employ Photoshop effects. Page 2 of issue 81, the first after the recap page, has May jumping around with the background blurred. It's a nice effect and I do it quite a bit myself, but if I may, there's a better way to do it. Right now, whenever you try that, as in that page or the shot of the Avengers and May high above Avengers Mansion, the characters all look as if they have a black blur around them as an aftereffect of selecting areas too close to the figure to blur out. I know it might be an extra step for the illustrator, but it would look much more seamless if he inked the shots of May separately and let the effects handle the backgrounds in shots like that. It would really emphasize the distance in a much cleaner way and she'd have a nice crisp outline. Also, you could in turn put a different degree of blur on each of the afterimages as she jumps around.

In fact, in the shot below the Avengers Mansion I talked about, you did something more effective by screening out the background blacks, and that works well, too. One last bit—when throwing type onto the side or front of a building, you can match the perspective of the building as in the high school shot by using the transform: distort tool.

I've been doing storyboards and comics for a couple decades now and I just thought you might want to know these tips to make a great book even better. Thanks again for a consistently fun read.

Rick Lundeen
Western Springs, IL

Thanks for the tips, Rick! We'll pass them on to Gotham, who was responsible for all the effects you mentioned.

Dear Tom, Ron, and crew:

Recently, I have been starting to feel more and more ambivalent about buying and reading comic books. I thought it was because as a 31-year-old man with a wife and a career that maybe it was time to grow up and put away the frivolity of my youth. I also think that my feelings of ambivalence were influenced by the disappointment I have been feeling toward "realistic" stories, which serve to deconstruct the idea of super heroes in an effort to make them more real. Don't get me wrong—I have enjoyed such stories in the past, but it seems that this type of storytelling has leaked into almost every super hero comic. When I pick up stories about Spider-Man, the Avengers, and other such characters, I am expecting to be transported to a world of good and evil, where good will always win in the end, no matter the odds. I think we need stories like that.

I picked up a stack of comics yesterday from the local store, which included AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #514, NEW AVENGERS #1 and several other books. The writing was good, but I wasn't taken to that place I wanted to go. My spirits were dampened and I really felt like stopping reading comics altogether.

That was until I picked up SPIDER-GIRL #81. I always know what I'm getting when I read the tales of Mayday crafted so well by Tom D., Ron, Pat and the crew. I expect, and usually receive, a trip to that world that I spoke about where everything isn't easy, but good will always win in the end. Mayday's exploits always remind me of why I love the character of Spider-Man so much. I was hoping to be uplifted when I read her latest tale.

I was blown away. This book was the kind of story you want to share with others and point to when talking about great comics. There is no "decompressed storytelling" here. Tom D. fits more into 32 pages than modern writers get into 4 issues. This "self-contained" story was no exception. Subplots are continued and serve the main story (imagine that?). The main story itself is excellently crafted and has an emotional payoff, even if it has been done before in other books. The epilogue with Mayday and Peter was very heartwarming and reminds us all why we care so deeply for these characters.

But the most impressive thing to me was to see how Tom D. portrayed Mayday's contemporaries' reaction to meeting her dad, the one and only Spider-Man. He wasn't seen as some sort of costumed goofball who couldn't stop telling jokes. He wasn't shown as some sort of brooding anti-hero. He was seen as we all see him—as one of the great heroes of all time. The Avengers knew what Spidey was all about and appreciated everything he did for them and the world. Spidey is the kind of hero who other super heroes admire. He's not the biggest or the strongest, but he has an indomitable will which allows him to triumph over anything. And I'm glad to see that Tom D. recognizes that is how those heroes would see Peter. I'm also glad that Mayday possesses that same Parker will, even though she is very different from her father.

I enjoyed seeing Electro and the interaction with Peter, although it is difficult for me to imagine Max Dillon as a reformed citizen. It was good to see that Spidey treated him with respect, rather than throwing out the old one-liners to tease Electro. That is the Peter I know—the one who jokes in the face of danger when he knows it will calm him and upset his adversary, but also the one who recognizes when joking is not appropriate and can handle situations with dignity and class .

My spirits have been lifted, thanks in part to a girl named Mayday and the team of Tom D. and Ron (great job again, Ron). I will continue to read comics for the foreseeable future, in the hope that more writers will tell stories like SPIDER-GIRL #81.

Peter Greiner
Conshohocken, PA

HOO-HA, Peter!

Tom and Ron,

What a wonderful issue SPIDER-GIRL #81 was! Max Dillon's bravery in wanting to help his daughter, initially by staying away from her, then later approaching an old enemy to stop her following in his tracks, brought tears to my eyes. I think it brought it home to May just how much her father does care for her, and how lucky she is to have such a dad. I hope she remembers it! As a mother who has a son with a condition that has meant that our family has had to go the extra mile, I empathize with poor Max; the very fact you have us feeling that way about one of Spidey's old foes shows that good writing in comics still exists! This story and its dedication meant a lot to me. Thank you for acknowledging the love and effort and support that goes into being a parent.

Heather Buchanan
Wellington, New Zealand

We should be thanking you, Heather! This world really does have plenty of super heroes, and you're one of them!

Thanks for being there!

Tom D.

NEXT ISSUE:
"FAMILY BUSINESS"
When an old enemy returns to destroy the Fantastic Five, Spider-Girl must join the children of the original FF as the last line of defense!

STEPHANIE MOORE
ASSISTANT EDITOR

MOLLY LAZER
EDITOR

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF